

Subject: Announcement of One-Day Military Firing Exercise in Northwest Islands Off the Coast of Korea Between Dec. 18-21, 2010

The U.S. Embassy in Seoul is transmitting the following information through the Embassy's Warden System as a public service to all U.S. citizens in the Republic of Korea. Please disseminate this message broadly to U.S. citizens.

This warden message is being issued in response to the announcement on December 16, 2010, by the Government of the Republic of Korea that it will "hold a one-day live-fire drill on Yeonpyeong Island between Dec. 18 and 21." The Embassy does not assess that there has been an increase in the threat environment in South Korea.

Given the increased tensions since the North Korean shelling of Yeonpyeong Island on November 23, 2010, it is understandable that U.S. citizens would be concerned regarding the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. However, the Embassy reminds U.S. citizens in the Republic of Korea that military training exercises are routinely conducted throughout South Korea throughout the year, to include civil defense drills normally held eight (8) times a year. U.S. citizens should stay informed through local media about upcoming military exercises and civil defense drills that sometimes occur at short notice and for which the Embassy will not routinely provide advance notification. The Embassy continues to closely monitor the current situation. Should the security situation change, the Embassy will update this warden message.

U.S. citizens living or traveling in South Korea are reminded of the importance of enrolling with the Embassy through the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment System (STEP) website: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> . U.S. citizens without internet access may register in person at the U.S. Embassy. Enrollment is a voluntary way of telling us that you, as a U.S. citizen, are in Korea, whether for a long-term stay or for a short visit. In the event of an emergency, we use enrollment information to communicate with you. This could include a family emergency in which relatives in the United States request that the Embassy contact you.

For the latest security information worldwide, U.S. citizens should regularly monitor the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov> where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States, or, for callers from outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

End text.